

**St. John United Church of Christ**  
**“In Christ We Live, Celebrate, & Serve”**

September 7, 2025

Rev. Karla Frost, Pastor

9:30 Zoom & In-Person Worship

2901 Nameoki Road

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YouTube: gcstjohnucc

13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost (C)

David R. Ekstrand, Dir. of Music

9:30 Sunday School for Children

Granite City, IL 62040

(618) 877-6060

Instagram: @stjohnucc2901gc

Facebook: Search St. John UCC Granite City

Large print bulletins are available from the Ushers.

***Bold italic denotes congregation reads or sings.***

\*Denotes all who are able, please stand.

**WE COME TO WORSHIP GOD**

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC AND BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

\*GREETING ONE ANOTHER WITH A SMILE AND WAVE

\*RESPONSE<sup>1</sup>

***“He Has Made Me Glad”***

#657

***I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart;***

***I will enter his courts with praise.***

***I will say, “This is the day that the Lord has made!”***

***I will rejoice for he has made me glad.***

***He has made me glad, he has made me glad,***

***I will rejoice for he has made me glad.***

***He has made me glad, he has made me glad,***

***I will rejoice for he has made me glad.***

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

O Lord, you have searched me and known me...You hem me in,

behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. (139:1, 5)

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

*Savior Like a Shepard Lead Us*

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER<sup>2</sup>

God knows us when we are at our very best,

***And when we are at our very worst.***

So, here we are, ready to worship.

***We are a confusing mixture of our best and worst parts.***

Yet God invites us here.

***And we thank God for always welcoming us home.***

We welcome the Holy Spirit to breathe in us as we worship,

***And as we go from the Lord's house into creation.***

And so, we worship and pray together:

***Creator God, you have crafted us in your image and created us for greatness, as we share your love, justice, and compassion. Help us to live into this. Strengthen us, as we seek to answer your call. When we go astray, guide us back to your ways. When we fall apart, put us back together again. When we shrink in fear, lift our heads, that we may see your love and grace welcoming us home. Amen.***

\*HYMN AND NOISY OFFERING ***“Jesus Calls Us o’er the Tumult”***  
#345

\*LITANY OF CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS<sup>2</sup>

God knows us better than anyone, and loves us more deeply than we can fathom. Even when we become less than God created us to be, God continues to love us and have faith in us.

***Creator God, we hear the whisper of your call. Help us open our ears to listen attentively. When we plug our ears to your call and choose evil instead, rework us for obedience. When we refuse to be shaped by your creative, loving hands, search our hearts and restore us to your good graces. Amen.***

Marvelously set apart, we are created in God's own image.

Marvelously saved by grace, we are re-created in Christ's love.

Marvelously sustained in faith, we are new creations in the Spirit.

***Thanks be to God!***

### **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD**

HEBREW SCRIPTURE LESSON    Jeremiah 18:1-11    pg. 677

ANTHEM    *Arise! Shine!*    Chancel Choir

GOSPEL LESSON    Luke 14:25-33    pg. 73

MEDITATION

### **WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

\*HYMN    ***“Have Thine Own Way, Lord!”***    #486

PASTORAL PRAYER

## **THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

### STEWARDSHIP INVITATION

#### OFFERTORY

*Make Me a Servant*

#### \*RESPONSE<sup>3</sup>

***"As Saints of Old"***

Vs. 3 #570

***With gratitude and humble trust we bring our best to you,  
not just to serve your cause,  
but share your love with neighbors too.***

***O God, who gave yourself to us in Jesus Christ your Son,  
help us to give ourselves each day until life's work is done.***

#### \*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION<sup>2</sup>

***Gracious God, you have blessed us beyond measure; you  
have entrusted us as partners to care for your world. Bless  
these gifts and our lives. Transform everything we are in this life  
into offerings that bring your love to the world. Amen.***

#### INVITATION<sup>2</sup>

Carrying the cross may mean taking steps that frighten us.

***Carrying the cross may mean listening instead of talking.***

Carrying the cross may mean bringing love to the loveless.

***Carrying the cross may mean confessing when we're wrong.***

Carrying the cross may mean offering forgiveness  
to those who have hurt us.

***Carrying the cross may mean sharing  
when we really don't want to.***

As we participate in this Sacrament, we are all invited to come with  
the crosses we carry,

***And know that Christ helps us to carry them  
and to grow in love for him, for ourselves, and for the world.***

### COMMUNION PRAYER

#### PREPARING AND SHARING THE ELEMENTS

All are invited to the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The inner circle of cups  
contains white grape juice. The outer circles contain wine. Please hold each  
element when served in the pews so all may partake together, remembering that in  
the upper room last supper Jesus said, "take this and divide it among yourselves."  
(Luke 22:17b)

#### \*UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING<sup>4</sup>

***Grant, O God, that the ears which have heard the voice of your song may be closed to the voice of clamor and dispute; that the eyes which have seen your great love may also behold your blessed hope; that the tongues which have sung your praise may speak the truth; that the feet which have walked your courts may walk in the region of light; and that the bodies which have tasted your living body may be restored in newness of life. Glory be to you, O God.***

\*HYMN

***“Search Me, O God”***

#385

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE

***Shall We Gather at The River***

<sup>1</sup> “He Has Made Me Glad”, Hymn #657, Words and Music by Leona Von Brethorst (1923-) © 1976 Maranatha Praise, Inc. (The Admin Company). Used by permission CCLI License #1334401

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2025*. Copyright © 2024 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

<sup>3</sup> “As Saints of Old Their First-fruits Brought”, Hymn #570, Words by Frank Von Christierson (1900-1996) ©1961, Ren. 1989 The Hymn Society (Admin. Hope Publishing Company)

<sup>4</sup> Reprinted from Book of Worship © 1986 by permission of the United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership.

We thank Sharon O’Toole for serving as liturgist and Rae Ellen Vogeler for serving as greeter.

The **altar vases** are given in loving memory of the **September 5<sup>th</sup> birthday of Lois Hollenbeck** and in celebration of the birthdays of **Lauren and Lakin Luebbers on September 8<sup>th</sup> and Maren on September 11<sup>th</sup>** from Bob, Anna, & Alicia Hollenbeck.

If you would like to place **flowers on the altar**, and pick them up after church or on Monday, please call **Nancy Jacobs 314-712-6388**.

Flower Emporium offers \$25 (small), \$30 (medium), or \$35 (large) arrangements. If you would like to **sponsor a bulletin**, please call the **Church Office at (618) 877-6060**. The following dates are currently available; October 19, 2025, & November 30, 2025.

**THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE IF YOU WISH TO PLACE A FLOWER ORDER.**